

LEADERSHIP'S INVOLVEMENT IN SEPARATIONS!

9. Separations are really a sensitive issue—they are an affair of the heart, & therefore are more sensitive than almost any other kind of situation. We want to be considerate of people's feelings, we want to help them decide for themselves what they feel is best & what they believe is the Lord's Will. Our people have got to learn to make decisions on their own, to get the answers for themselves. So leadership's involvement in separations cannot be coming in & saying, "Okay, you do this & you do that!" Our people have to see for themselves what's best & what is God's Will, otherwise they'll always blame their leadership for it.

10. It's true that the Lord has given us the authority to lead & guide others, but with that authority comes the responsibility of loving & caring for them, & making sure that they & their children are taken care of.

11. Separations are a very complicated issue, & every situation is different. That's probably why a lot of our leadership have gotten themselves into a lot of trouble & created a lot of problems by trying to break people up. In many cases they probably saw that there really was a problem in the relationship, & they knew that everyone would be better off if a separation were to take place. But, sad to say, they didn't always know how to handle it very wisely.

12. Perhaps the leadership just came in & decreed that a couple needed to separate without any real explanation or showing the parties involved the good fruit that it could bring forth in their lives. Often it makes it a lot easier for such couples if a little temporary separation is suggested.

13. In some of these relationships they've simply gotten so familiar over the years, it's almost impossible for them to break out of that rut, out of that mold, & they find in some ways that it's really a relief for them to be separated. Although it's difficult in other ways, particularly in their care for the children, in some ways it's a real break-through in the spirit & a relief & a lightness & a real peace, & almost everyone whose separations we have had anything to do with has found that it

has borne good fruit.

14. Someone may have to suggest it, but if they just flatly ignore or refuse the suggestion, it's their decision before the Lord & what they do is really up to them! It's their individual decision that counts, because if they are more or less forced to break up & they don't want to & they don't really agree in their hearts, you can do all you can for them, but if their hearts & their minds aren't in full agreement with you, they might as well be back together. "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

15. It's sort of like choosing whether or not to be fully committed to the Lord, yielded to the Lord. Each one of us has to make that choice before the Lord, & we can't have anybody else make it for us. "Choose ye this day! Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind!"—Josh.24:15; Rom.14:5.

TEMPORARY SEPARATIONS!

16. We can't really give specific rules regarding all of this because each case is different & each individual situation certainly needs to be handled differently, prayerfully & led of the Lord! In some cases we've suggested temporary separations. In fact, in some cases that's all that their marriage really needed, & when they separated for a few months they realised how much they actually loved & needed each other, & they sincerely wanted to straighten out & get victories, so they went to work on their problems, drew closer to the Lord & were able afterwards to get back together & go on in a much better relationship.

17. A temporary separation is also helpful in that it helps the parties decide if they really want to go through with a permanent separation or not. They can see for themselves where they're at.

18. It's wise that such folks have at least one chance to get back together again, if they so desire, after 3 or 6 months or something, & then they can judge how it went when they were separated & how it goes again when they're back together. It really helps the couple themselves to see what they need when they have that comparison.